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and the rivalry of Disraeli and Gladstone down to the Reform Act of 1884 fills another. One more chapter is devoted to the Home Rule agitation and the concluding chapter reviews the political relations of England with India and the colonies throughout the century. The final word is a discussion of Imperial Federation, which does not to the author seem impracticable. At the middle of the century the author pauses for retrospect of early Victorian England in a short chapter full of kaleidoscopic condensations. Appendices show the chief members of British cabinets, lists of contemporaneous foreign sovereigns, and statistics of British population and national finance during the century. There is an index sufficiently copious and complete.

In statement of fact this book, as an epitome, is excellent. It is usually careful and it is always lucid. The author possesses indeed the unusual knack of imparting to the ordinary monotony of a rapid chronicle a certain aspect of sprightliness and humor by frequent flashes of character-study and intimate revelations of motive, neatly turned in single phrases. It is perhaps this tendency to enliven the narrative which sometimes betrays the author into a form of expression too hasty or careless. Occasionally an infinitive is ruthlessly sacrificed and crude phrases crop out here and there which might possibly escape the censor in a newspaper office. Thus, "Masséna's last approach to the frontier was stopped dead;" the English ministry was "not prepared to stand in to the bargain" with Nicholas I.; "meanwhile Peel passed (*sic*!) many admirable laws;" "a long spell of exile from office awaited the friends of Home Rule." It is curious that although Lord Goderich is correctly named in the table of ministries he should appear in the index and in the text as "Gooderich." Generally, the narrative shows no color of prejudice, although the author does not conceal his opposition to Mr. Gladstone's junction with the Parnellite party and to the "Home Rule" policy, and he refers to British annexations in the Pacific in these terms: "The main reason of their occupation has always been the activity of our encroaching neighbors, and not our own desire for more coral reefs and atolls." The general reader will, of course, find McCarthy's *History of Our Own Times*, for the period it covers, a much more profitable work to read than this little volume. In comparison with the abridgment of McCarthy's work which has lately appeared in the "Story of the Nations" series, Mr. Oman's book has only the advantage of brevity and compactness in one volume. It is, however, undoubtedly an excellent text-book with which to prepare in the schools for an examination upon recent British political history.

C. H. L.

A History of Italian Unity. Being a Political History of Italy from 1814 to 1871. By BOLTON KING, M.A. (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1899. Two vols., pp. 416, 451.)

By writing an indiscreet preface Mr. King puts his reviewer on the alert. For when a man says he is practically the only English or French

writer who has treated modern Italian history "with much pretence to accuracy or research," we at once reflect that, were this true, it would better become someone else than an unknown candidate for historical honors to proclaim it of himself. After such a beginning, we need not wonder at the further boast that he has "had recourse to almost all the published matter of any importance (nearly 900 works in all) except (*a*) contemporary journals as a rule and (*b*) some literature out of print and not to be seen in England." A man who thus regards himself as both pioneer and paragon in this field of history can hardly care what humble critics think of him; nevertheless, it is our duty to say that Mr. King neither deserves the pioneer's laurel with which he has crowned himself nor does his bibliography contain "almost all the published matter of any importance." A glance at it shows the omission of at least fifty works, some of which possess greater historical value than those Mr. King cites, and of hundreds of pamphlets. Mr. King makes no distinction between large and small books. The novice would never suspect, for instance, that Settembrini's *Protesta* is a mere pamphlet of fifty pages, its title being printed in the same type as Brofferio's 4000-page *Storia del Parlamento Subalpino*. As an illustration of Mr. King's candor we find that he passes over in silence the excellent six-volume edition in English of Mazzini's *Works*, in order to mention a slight volume of selections from Mazzini to which Mr. Bolton King furnished an introduction! A little further inspection discloses the fact that Mr. King has omitted the titles of all English and American works bearing on this field, with the exception of Countess Cesaresco's *Italian Characters*, and yet her *Liberation of Italy*—not to speak of other works—has value which Mr. King's history lacks.

To the American student of history, however, Mr. King's unpardonable sin must be his ignorance of German. Imagine an Oxford graduate at this late day unable to read German, who yet boldly assumes to be the master historian of an epoch in recent European history for parts of which a knowledge of German is indispensable! Down to 1861 he might get along well enough with French and Italian, but how can a historian, who makes such a public "pretence to accuracy and research," follow all sides of the relations between Italy and Prussia from 1861 to 1870, including the alliance of 1866, without knowing German? Would Mr. King bestow any leaf of his laurels on a German who should undertake to write a history of the Home Rule agitation with a reading knowledge of only French and Italian? But for this astonishing defect in education, Mr. King would be aware that a German named Reuchlin has treated the history of Italy from 1814 to 1870 with great accuracy, patient research and more detail than Mr. King himself uses; can it be that the British Museum does not possess Reuchlin's three volumes, the last of which appeared in 1873? And since a large part of Italy's struggle for independence concerns Austria, would it not be well for the historian to know German in order to acquaint himself with the Austrian point of view?

Coming now to the work itself, we soon discover that it does not belong to the class of histories which rank as literature. It has the hard-

ness of texture which characterizes most manuals and departmental reports. Its merits are an evident purpose to be just and the most painstaking diligence. Although Mr. King disavows the intention of writing more than a political history, he gives considerable space to social and economic details, being especially addicted to statistics. He analyzes patiently, and much more minutely than they require, the ephemeral constitutions, and the official acts of ephemeral legislatures. But to convey in words the impression of the great tidal wave of emotion and passion which swept over Italy after the election of Pius IX. and culminated in the revolution of 1848 lies far beyond his reach. In general he sets down the facts in proper order; but the spirit which animated the Italians seems to have vanished. Now, no history can be true, unless it reproduces the spirit of the time with which it deals; in the Italian struggle the romantic element often predominated; and no amount of statistics or economic facts or analysis of fleeting legislation can reproduce the romance. We take the revolution of 1848 as a test, because according as an historian treats it, he discloses his ability to cope with the entire period. Mr. King may feel, but he fails to make his readers feel, the sweep and glow of that movement. He seems never to have visited Italy—a fatal disadvantage.

At other points where we have examined him, we find the letter duly recorded but the spirit wanting. He occasionally has an inkling of Cavour's greatness, but the student who knew Cavour solely from Mr. King's pages, might be excused for wondering where his greatness came in. "Inadequate," we say of his brief review of Cavour's early life; "inadequate," we repeat of the account of the diplomacy before the war of 1859; "inadequate" we say again of the story of the political difficulties during Garibaldi's Sicilian expedition. But possibly Mr. King, after further consideration, may revise some of his opinions about Cavour; he has already done so at several points since he printed his essay on Mazzini a few years ago. His opinions, whether of men or measures, lack the stamp of finality.

In spite of Mr. King's "accuracy and research," his book contains many slips, some evidently merely typographical, others due to the author's inaccuracy. But what has troubled the present reviewer more than incorrect dates and misquotations—more even than Mr. King's habit of reporting what Metternich or Cavour or Victor Emanuel said, without giving his source—is the style in which he writes. Who can be expected to read with pleasure 850 pages of this sort of rhetoric: "Austria, indeed, permitted herself the luxury of a persecution, infamous even among her own state-trials, and sent Confalonieri (his life saved by his wife's heroic importunacy) and many another of his comrades to the Moravian fortress-prison of the Spielberg, where the Emperor Francis played with his victims like a cat with maimed birds, and whose horrors Pellico's pen has made the symbol of Austrian cruelty" (I. 37-38). A little before (I. 30) we find *was* or *were* used 17 times on a single page; a little later (I. 46) they appear 14 times. In war it may be good tactics to make

your auxiliaries do all the fighting, but in literary composition this method results in dulness. We hold that to-day the first duty of historical writers should be to present their material in good literary form. A man may "have recourse" to 900 or 9000 works without qualifying himself for writing. In strict accuracy, for instance, would a clear writer have entitled this very book "*A History of Italian Unity*," when Italian Unity began only after the occupation of Rome by the King, the date at which Mr. King's history ends?

WILLIAM ROSCOE THAYER.

The Life of Prince Bismarck. By WILLIAM JACKS. (Glasgow: James Maclehose and Sons. 1899. Pp. xvi, 512.)

Le Prince de Bismarck. Par CHARLES ANDLER. (Paris: Georges Bellais. 1899. Pp. x, 402).

THE national hero of the military type is usually the subject of a variety of inadequate biographies. For the prominence of spectacular features in such a career awakens an impulse in a host of men to attempt that which is beyond the strength of all but the greatest. Prince Bismarck proves no exception to the rule, and the latest work upon him is open to two general objections. Conceived in a spirit of admiration for services rendered, natural enough in a German, but curious in a Briton, it reflects the uncritical opinions of the common man. The latter, because of the smallness of his stature, is at a disadvantage in any effort to appreciate his greater brother. When the line of upward vision makes a sharp angle with the perpendicular, the power to correctly estimate relations and proportions is gone. In this case there are repeated all the half-legendary conceptions concerning the great issues. For example, the French Cabinet, supported by papal and court influences, is represented after 1866 as resolved upon war, no hint being given of the changes in its membership, or the fluctuations of policy on the part of the Emperor and his advisers.

Again the story of the Hohenzollern candidacy and the events leading up to the final rupture is told in such a way as to reproduce the naïve impression common among the Germans at the time. Corrections made by later additions to our knowledge are left out of account, apart from the incident of the Ems despatch and Bismarck's connection with it, which is told in full.

The second general fault is that, much as the giant's strength and cleverness, his wit and sarcasm, his readiness and far-sightedness are dwelt upon, none of these things are actually seen or felt by the reader. There is no clear-cut presentation of the political issues, and the extraordinary simplicity and directness of Bismarck's methods of meeting them. This is the more remarkable because the account of his political career is mainly composed of extracts from his letters and speeches from the time of the meeting of the Prussian United Diet in 1847 down to the organization of the Reichstag in 1871. The intention is that the man should